

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 523
By Scroggs

A RESOLUTION to honor and congratulate Coach George Gibson and the 1997 Houston High School cross-country team, the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association state champion.

WHEREAS, the sport of cross-country has a long and illustrious history, tracing its roots to an early 19th century sport called paper chasing. One of the earliest competitions was the Crick Run, which started at Rugby School in 1837; and

WHEREAS, the talented Houston High School boys' cross country team has continued this storied tradition as it won the coveted 1997 Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association State Cross Country Championship, despite having to compete in mud and intermittent rain at Percy Warner Park, in Nashville; and

WHEREAS, the team scored 33 points, a phenomenal 77 fewer than second place Kingsport Dobyns-Bennett and in the process compiled the lowest score in recent statewide competition; and

WHEREAS, six Houston High School runners finished in the top 13; and

WHEREAS, during their memorable regular season, the "Men in Black" won all but one race they entered, finishing second to sixth-ranked Nevada Union in the tough National Vulcan Cross Country meet; and

WHEREAS, Houston High School was ranked tenth in the nation in both the authoritative final *USA Today* poll, and the prestigious *Harrier Magazine*; and

400000001

40000001

010110

01011026

WHEREAS, highly regarded Coach George Gibson has done an excellent job of molding the team into championship caliber; and

WHEREAS, Brett Baddorf was the team's leader, winning the individual championship by an impressive 16-second margin. He also won every race he competed in, including the celebrated Southeast High Invitational, in Pensacola, Florida; the Vulcan Classic, in Birmingham, Alabama and the historic Tennessee Classic in Nashville; and

WHEREAS, the other Houston High runners who contributed to the scoring were: Craig Kozial, who finished fifth; Nick Leonardi, who finished eighth; Landon Moore, who finished ninth and Trapper Pressler, who finished eleventh; and

WHEREAS, each of those finishers and Ryan Baddorf, brother of Brett, who finished 13th, received all-state medals. Nick Hasser also contributed significantly to the team effort; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that we pause in our deliberations to salute the many accomplishments of this talented team; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE-HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That we honor and congratulate Coach George Gibson and the 1997 Houston High School boys' cross-country team on winning the state championship and extend to them our best wishes for every future success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That appropriate copies of this resolution be prepared for presentation to the school and each person named above, with this final clause omitted from such copies.